

### *On the Aversion of Men of Taste*

another style, be as eloquent for goodness as St. Paul himself. He would therefore have assured himself, either that it was not necessary to be a Christian, or that this order of feelings was not necessary to that character. But if the apostle's sagacity had detected the cause of this reserve, and the nature of his associate's reflections, he would most certainly have declared to him with emphasis that both these things were necessary—or that he had been deceived by inspiration: and he would have parted from this self-complacent man with admonition and compassion. Would St. Paul have been wrong? But if he would have been right, what becomes of those authors, whose works, whether from neglect or design, tend to satisfy their readers of the perfection of a form of character which he would have pronounced essentially unsound?

Again, moral writings are instructions on the subject of happiness. Now the doctrine of this subject is declared in the evangelical testimony: it had been strange indeed if it had not, when the happiness of man was expressly the object of the communication. And what, according to this communication, are the essential requisites to that condition of the mind without which no man ought to be called happy: without which ignorance or insensibility alone can be content, and folly alone can be cheerful? A simple reader of the Christian scriptures will reply that they are—a change of heart, called conversion, the assurance of the pardon of sin through Jesus Christ, a habit of devotion approaching so near to intercourse with the Supreme Object of devotion that revelation has called it "communion with God," a process named sanctification, of improvement in all internal and external virtue, a confidence in the divine Providence that all things shall work together for good, and a conscious preparation for another life, including a firm hope of eternal felicity. And what else can he reply? Did the lamp of heaven ever shine more clearly since omnipotence lighted it, than these ideas display themselves through the Christian revelation? Is this then absolutely and exclusively the true account of happiness? It is not that which our accomplished writers in general have chosen to sanction. Your recollection will tell you that they have most certainly presumed to avow, or to insinuate, a doctrine of happiness which implies much of